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Making it work – Creating opportunities, handling Restrictions



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Conference

GDEN Conference - TIME + SPACE

Presentation title

Making it work – *Creating opportunities,
handling Restrictions*

Presented by

Mike Pinkney
michael.pinkney@northumbria.ac.uk

Formerly...

Graphic Designer

Working in studios in London and Newcastle upon Tyne

Studio-based career focussed mostly on retail and identity:



LAURA ASHLEY



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Formerly...

Graphic Designer

Freelance career was focussed on work in the third sector:



Currently...

***Northumbria University:
Subject Lead - Communication Design
Senior Lecturer - Graphic Design BA (Hons)***

*3 year BA (Hons) degree programme with second
and third year specialist pathways in:*

- ***Branding***
- ***Typography & Editorial Design***
- ***Illustration***





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A new Module...

‘Graphic Design in a Social Context’

- *“...This module will include a focus on the importance of social, ethical and sustainable issues for commercial clients and organisations, NGOs and those working within the charitable sector.”*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Teaching style*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Teaching style*

At Northumbria, all lecturers in Graphic Design, are now, or have at one time been, practitioners in this field. They are therefore, as teachers and as a course, “steeped in a disciplinary area, and (their) teaching and learning practices will mostly be derived from the relevant professional values and tacit norms in that domain” Dunn et al (2005, p211). The decisions they make and the way in which they teach are closely aligned to the industry.



Methodology - Key components...

- *Teaching style*

The lecturers:

- *Set the briefs*
- *Teach the module*
- *Assess the module*

...are therefore well positioned to support a student through the design process to an appropriate solution.



Methodology - Key components...

- *Teaching style*

This process is described by Biggs as scaffolding. “When the interweaving of formative assessment tasks towards a summative event is formalised in a course, it may be called scaffolding” Biggs 1990 quoted in (Dunn et al, p19, 20).

This is very much the model used by the Graphic Design course.



Methodology - Key components...

The advantages of this method are:

- Constantly keep an eye on whether the student is fulfilling the learning outcomes*
- Make sure the students are aware of the criteria by which they will be assessed*
- An opportunity to engender 'deep learning' in the student*



Methodology - Key components...

What is a deep approach to learning? John Biggs describes it as an approach arising 'from a felt need to engage the task appropriately and meaningfully. When students feel this need to know, they automatically try to focus on underlying meaning, on main ideas, themes, principles or successful application.' Biggs (2004, p16)



Methodology - Key components...

Biggs goes on to explain that one of the most important principles of deep learning is “using teaching and assessment methods that support the explicit aims and objectives of the course.” Biggs (2004, p17)



Methodology - Key components...

Some of the drawback with this method of teaching are:

- *It can lead the students to rely heavily on the tutors*

Which can present problems if:

- *A course has large cohorts of students*
- *Teaching hours are under increasing pressure*



Methodology - Key components...

For this project, several key decisions were made which would retain this 'deep learning' but try to shift some of the focus away from the reliance on the tutors to a reliance on each other.



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*

Pros

- *Negotiate between themselves, assign roles, contribute ideas and skills and accept the contribution of others.*
- *Forces the students into positions of compromise*
- *How they cope with these, sometimes very uncomfortable, positions can help shape and form their character and their future working practice.*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*

Pros

- *Exposure to the passion, drive and commitment of others.*
- *Time management and people management skills*
- *Easier for external clients*
(working with 10 teams rather than 40 individual projects)



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*

Cons

- *Fall-outs - Learning to cooperate with each other*
- *Marking - strong and weak individuals within a group*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*
- *Working on a live brief*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*
- *Working on a live brief*

Pros

- *Adds a competitive edge*
- *Brings a focus and drive*
- *Possible publication and public presence for students*
- *Real-life constraints and opportunities*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*
- *Working on a live brief*
- *Working with a client*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Working collaboratively in small teams*
- *Working on a live brief*
- *Working with a client*
- *Working with 'service users' (if possible)*



Working with clients/service users...



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Students



Lecturer



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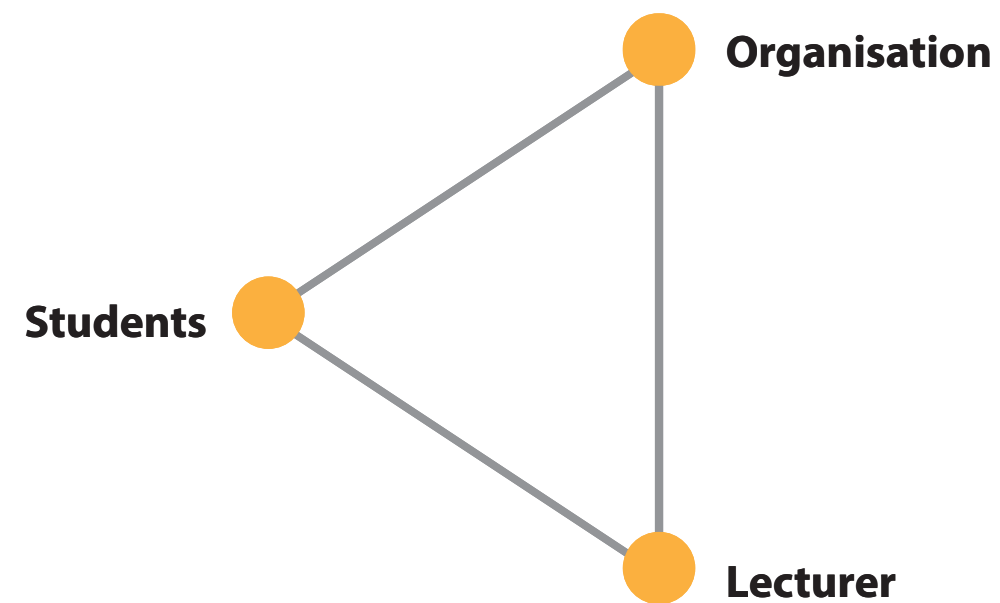
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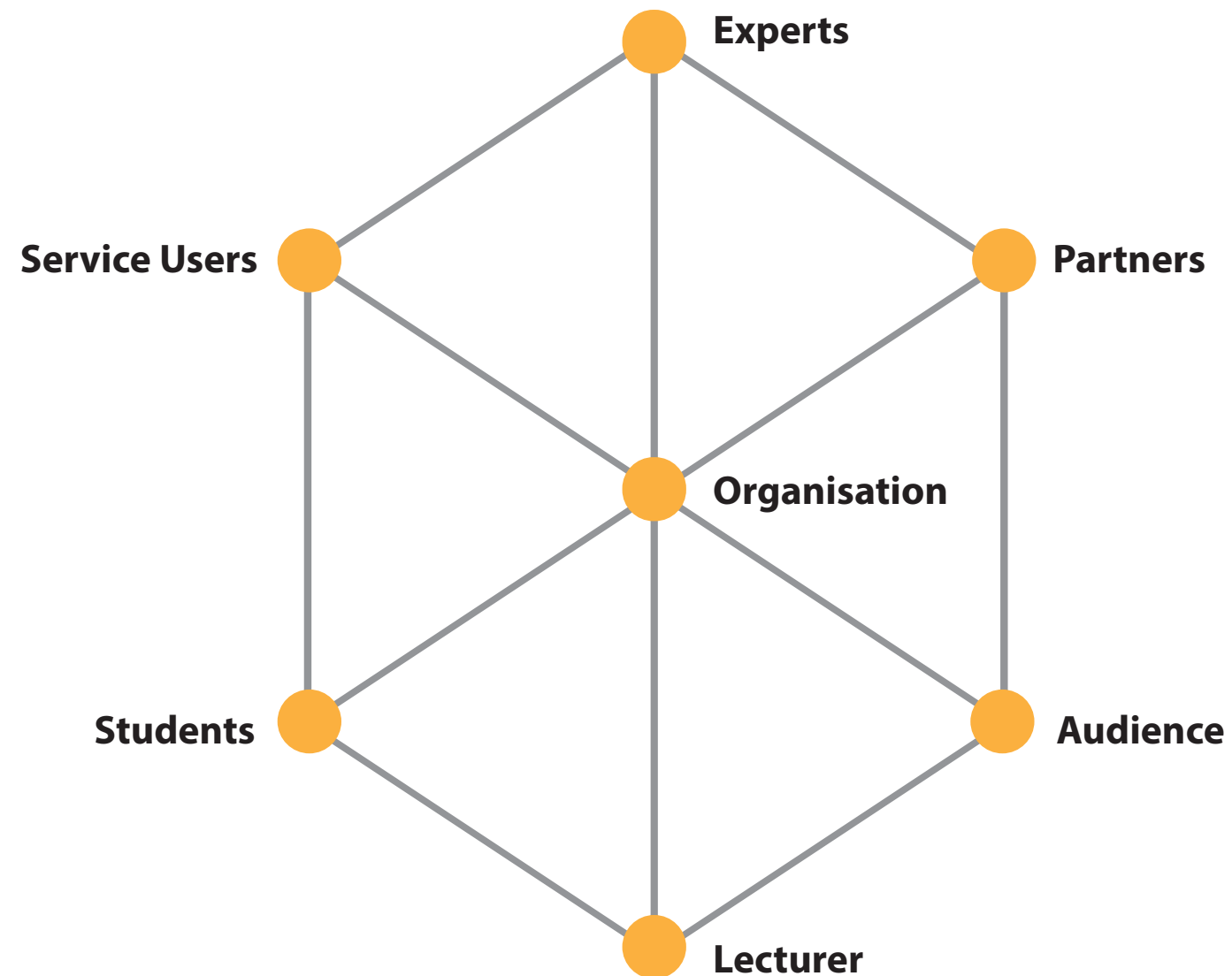
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Web of context, research and Knowledge

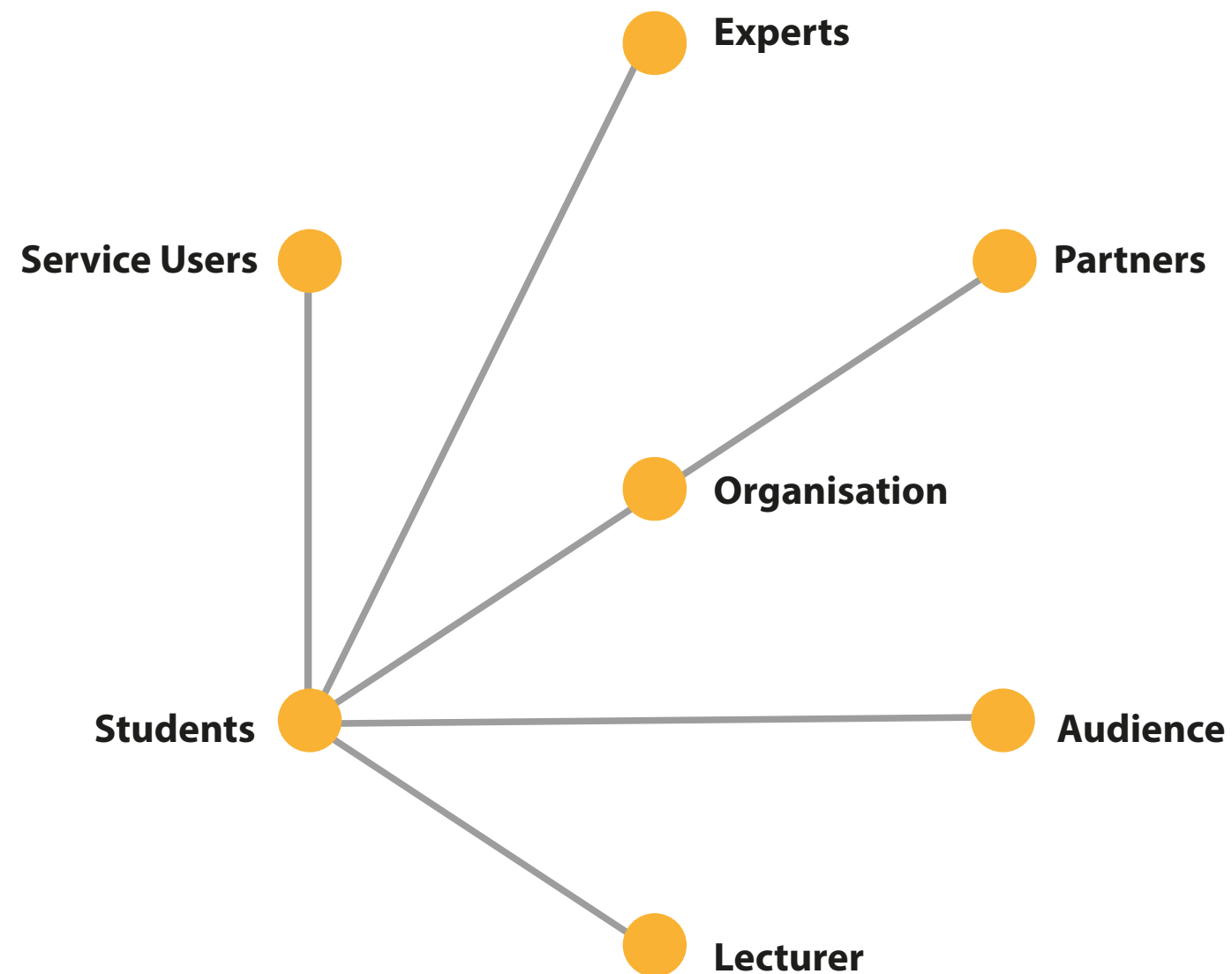


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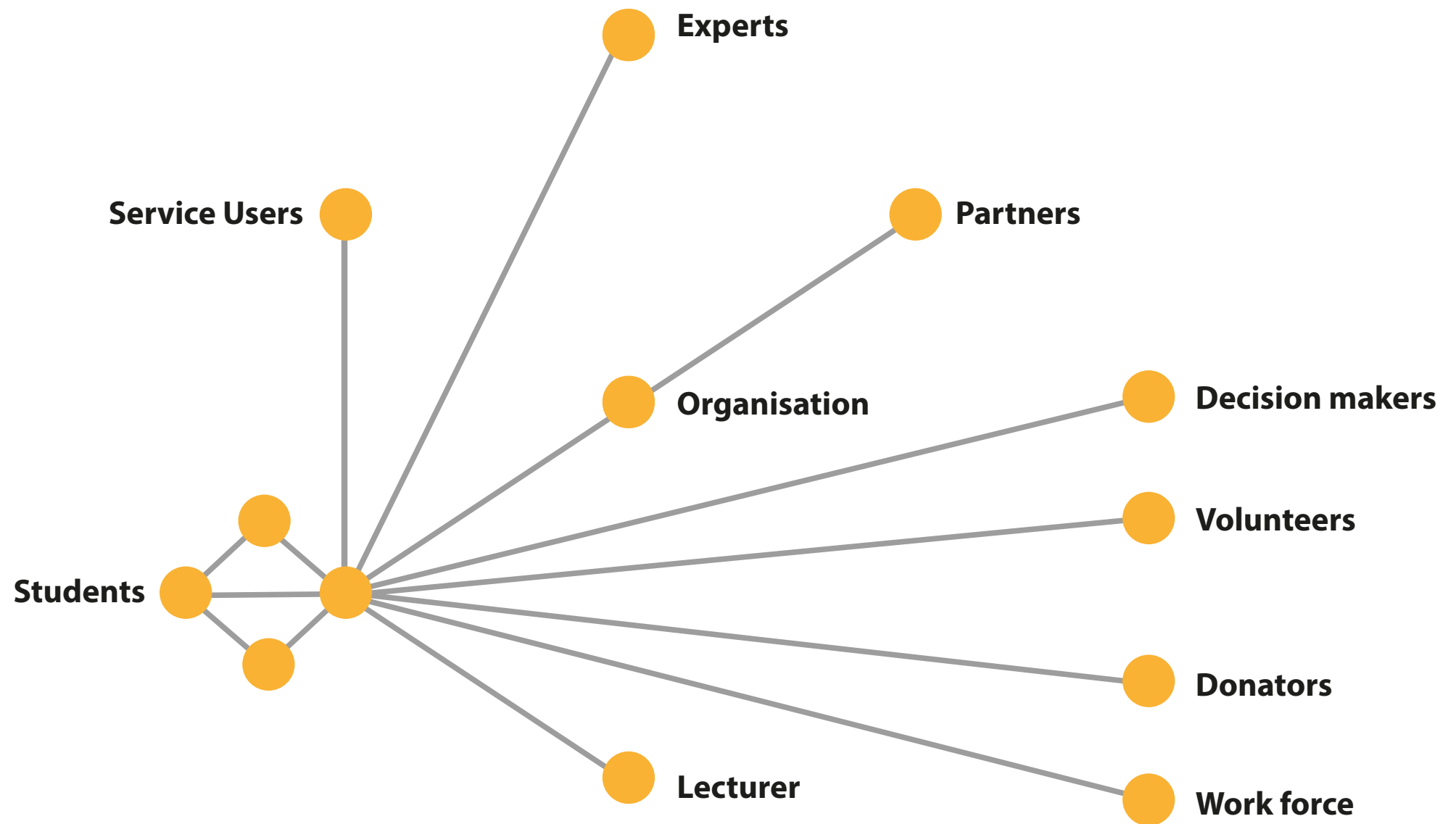


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Methodology - Key components...

- *Making the most of these connections...*
- *Initial 'client' briefing*
- *Ongoing 'client meetings' with groups*
- *Final presentations to 'client'*



Methodology - Key components...

- *Making the most of these connections...*
- *Enables primary research - research methods*
- *Enables timetabled meetings with 'clients'*
- *Enables discursive relationship, not one-way*
- *Enables rapport building - real life*



The Projects



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2012 - Encourage people to volunteer with The Cyrenians

The Cyrenians, Newcastle upon Tyne

The Brief

The aim of the Project was to promote volunteering as something that is worthwhile and rewarding to do, and to raise the Cyrenians profile as a good organisation to volunteer for.

The Cyrenians had just recruited a new Volunteer Manager and was looking to re-launch its volunteering programme in summer 2012.







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LET'S
BUILD
TOGETHER
GREYS MONUMENT
HELP US BEAT
THE WORLD RECORD

THE
BIG
BUILD
21.06.2012

www.thecyrenians.org/get_involved

the cyrenians
changing lives building futures



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Results

- ***89 new volunteers***
- ***Advertising and PR value across TV and Newspaper coverage was calculated by Cyrenian's Marketing team as being worth:***

Advertising Value = £13,850

PR Value = £41,550



Results

- ***World record 'unofficially' smashed:***

Harvard University - 1,100 boxes used

Northumbria University - 1,400 boxes used!!!



Project History

2018 - Action Foundation

Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Newcastle

2017 - Newcastle Society for Blind People

New name, new logo and Identity system

2016 - On Call Africa - Medical charity based in Glasgow, running projects in Ghana

New logo and Identity system

2015 - Newcastle Arts Initiative

New name, new logo, Identity system and launch campaign

2013 & 2014 - Changing Lives

Campaigns raising awareness for the organisation



Key Points

Focus on working closely with a client:

- *Working in small groups rather than individually, enables us to host client crits which don't last all week!*
- *Working closely with clients and tapping into their organisation, enables the students to build a 'web of context, research and knowledge' in a way which is simply not possible to do online.*
- *Students have a completely changed perspective on the issues faced by service users and the charities themselves.*
- *Projects become more diverse and more interesting.*
- *Students become more autonomous in their learning*



Thank you & Questions



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References

Biggs J (2005) Teaching for Quality Learning at University. What the student does. 2nd edition.

Dunn L, Morgan C, O'Reilly M, Parry S (2005) The Student assessment Handbook. New Directions in Traditional & Online Assessment. Routledge Falmer, London and New York.

